



TERRY E. BRANSTAD
GOVERNOR

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

KIM REYNOLDS
LT. GOVERNOR

July 16, 2012

Hon. Thomas J. Vilsack
Secretary of Agriculture
United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)
1400 Independence Ave. SW
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Secretary Vilsack:

The citizens of Iowa are currently experiencing prolonged drought conditions over eighty percent of the state caused by the recent hot, dry weather. Information from producers throughout the state indicates dry conditions have resulted in significant crop production losses and pose increasing risk to livestock. Unless our state receives rain soon, these conditions will only worsen and could reach extreme and dangerous levels.

Accordingly, I hereby request that the USDA Farm Service Agency provide disaster designations to drought impacted Iowa counties as soon as they qualify for that designation. Likewise, I request that the Farm Service Agency open CRP acres for haying and grazing as soon as federal guidelines allow to assist cattle producers, many of which are getting low on feed and need the additional hay for their animals. Impacted crop and cattle producers all over Iowa deserve swift assistance in this time of need and we look forward to working with you and your office in achieving this goal.

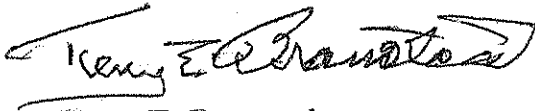
Over the past year and a half my office has worked swiftly and effectively with the state Farm Service Agency to ensure access to disaster aid through the Secretary of Agriculture's Disaster Designation process. This has included requesting designations for impacts from the 2011 Missouri River flooding and subsequent severe weather, a September 2011 wind event, and most recently the 2012 late spring freeze that impacted agriculture production in Iowa. As a result of these requests, impacted

producers in 87 of our 99 counties were provided access to disaster assistance programs..

As we have done in the past, my office, the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, and the office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management will continue to work collaboratively with USDA Farm Service Agency and other federal partners to deal with this continuing and serious problem. With continued communication and collaboration we can assist each other in providing the best services to the citizens of the state of Iowa.

My office looks forward to working with you and your staff to maximize assistance to producers who have been severely impacted by the recent hot, dry weather. If additional information is required, please contact Susan Dixon, Iowa Homeland Security Emergency Management Division of the Department of Public Defense at 515-725-3257.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Terry E. Branstad". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized initial "T".

Terry E. Branstad
Governor, State of Iowa

CC: Bill Northey, Iowa Secretary of Agriculture
Mark Schouten, Administrator, HSEMD
John Whitaker, State Executive Director, Farm Service Agency